

Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

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FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7420

INFO AMCONSUL ASMARA

AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE ADDIS ABABA 14623

E.O. 11 02: N/A

TAGS: PINS, PINT, ET

SUBJECT: STATUS OF STUDENT/TEACHER STRIKE

REF: ADDIS 13828

1. MANY STUDENTS AND TEACHERS PREVIOUSLY REPORTED ON STRIKE HAVE NOW RESUMED CLASSES, BOTH IN ADDIS ABABA AND COUNTRYSIDE. SITUATION APPEARS TO CHANGE ALMOST DAILY, HOWEVER, WITH SOME GRADES BOYCOTTING CLASSES ONE DAY AND RESUMING CLASS THE NEXT. EVEN THOSE CLASSES IN SESSION ARE SUBJECT TO INTERMITTENT DISRUPTIONS FROM OUTSIDE BY STRIKING STUDENTS. A TYPICAL CLASSROOM NOW SEEMS TO HAVE ABOUT 50 PERCENT OF ITS NORMAL COMPLEMENT OF STUDENTS IN ATTENDANCE.

2. IN SPITE OF GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCEMENT EXEMPTING 11TH GRADERS FROM ZEMETCHA SERVICE TO ALLOW NORMAL CLASS ATTENDANCE, 11TH GRADE CLASSES HAVE NOT RESUMED AS YET. ACCORDING TO SEVERAL SOURCES, MANY 10TH GRADE STUDENTS ARE CURRENTLY LOCKED OUT OF SCHOOLS BY ORDER OF CERTAIN SCHOOL OFFICIALS BECAUSE OF THEIR DISRUPTIVE ACTIVITIES. REMAINING JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS AND TEACHERS ARE

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UNDER GOVERNMENT ORDERS TO ATTEND CLASS. THOSE TEACHERS

WHO REMAIN OUT ON STRIKE HAVE BEEN THREATENED --
APPARENTLY WITH SOME DEGREE OF EFFECTIVENESS, PARTICULARLY
UPCOUNTRY -- WITH SALARY CUTOFF IN ORDER TO ENFORCE
EPMG ORDERS.

COMMENT: DESPITE INTERMITTENT AND OCCASIONALLY
WIDESPREAD STUDENT AND TEACHER WALK-OUTS, THE DISRUPTIVE
EFFECT HAS SO FAR BEEN NEGLIGIBLE. REASON FOR
THIS IS THAT STRIKERS HAVE, FOR THE MOST PART, SIMPLY
REMAINED AT HOME RATHER THAN ORGANIZING STREET DEMON-
STRATIONS. WHILE SOME INCIDENTS HAVE TAKEN PLACE IN
VARIOUS SCHOOLS, SECURITY FORCES HAVE GENERALLY
RESPONDED IMMEDIATELY BY ARRESTING STUDENTS BEFORE
FULL SCALE DEMONSTRATIONS CAN BE ORGANIZED. DIRG'S
DEMONSTRATED SEVERITY IN PUTTING DOWN PREVIOUS STRIKES
IS NO DOUBT A MAJOR FACTOR IN STUDENTS' RELUCTANCE TO
TAKE TO THE STREETS. END COMMENT.
HUMMEL

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